

ANARCHIST QUARTERLY

AUTUMN '84

no.2.

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THE 5% WHO WON'T



Despite a long tradition of parliamentary "democracy" and compulsory voting in this country (since the mid 1920's) recent reports support the view that the "authorities" are seriously concerned at the ever decreasing levels of voting in Australian elections.

A major campaign aimed at increasing electoral registration was launched by the Special Minister of State, Mick Young, on the 26th of September last year. Concern over the drop in registration in recent years is so high, in fact, that just over \$3 million has been earmarked for publicity drive to be run by the new "Australian Electoral Commission. Charged with conducting elections, carrying out redistributions and regulating donations and public spending on elections the Commission will also have as one of its major tasks the role of "promoting a greater awareness of the political process in Australian politics". An expensive "consciousness raising" exercise, indeed!

ORGANISING THE SHEEP

But, apparently our labour "leaders" think that \$3 million is a reasonable sum to pay (certainly more than they seem to think that womens' refuges and rape crisis centres are worth, for example). And, of course, in their eyes they have an urgent task! They must bring the erring (and non-voting) sheep back into the fold. The matter becomes all the more pressing if some of the "sheep" are developing their own ideas about how "the farm" might be organised.

HOW TO MAKE THEM VOTE?

The interesting question, of course, is how

the Hawke government is going to encourage the "disaffected" within our midst to see the light? For at least 5% of our population such a campaign may have quite some impact on their lives. For this is the proportion of the population who are now choosing not to "exercise their democratic rights". On top of this are those, who having registered at one time or another, now choose to absent themselves from the polls.

Are they, in fact, the courageous few?

WHY IS HAWKE CONCERNED?

According to the pre-publicity campaign survey conducted by Inview Pty. Ltd. for the government those not on the electoral rolls are, in the main, in their late teens and early 20's. The unemployed are heavily represented amongst those who, the surveyors say, declare their hostility towards the "system". No wonder the government is dismayed. But why should a comparatively low 5% of non-voters cause concern to the current government?

Even conservative Claude Forrell (THE AGE) can see that the "...government may be right to suspect that Labour would win a high proportion of the votes to be garnered." (by encouraging these people to vote). It is difficult to see any other political party gaining from their increased participation in the electoral process. A cynical political exercise at the very least.

NOT JUST THE UNEMPLOYED

As well as the young unemployed it was shown that

Continued from P.1.



"young women" and "even some tertiary educated women" were "showing an apathetic attitude". No wonder that it is women who see little benefit in participating in a system based upon power and number games so overwhelmingly dominated by men! We will see later how the government has chosen to bring them into line

WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO?

Time to look at the advertising campaign itself. Focusing on the "young and disaffected" the first move by the campaigners has been to have a bit of a go at those "radicals" who may be encouraging this deviance. As the only political movement in Australia putting a democratic alternative to "parliamentary democracy" and the nonsense of voting, anarchists may be interested to see how they (presumably) are depicted in the material produced by the advertisers commissioned by the government to do "the job".

A REVOLUTIONARY AFTERNOON TEA

Lights! Camera! Action! Gosh, but these advertisers have a limited imagination! Dressed in jungle greens (ready for storming the summer palace) our parlour revolutionists can't seem to think of any particular reasons for encouraging their "followers" not to vote. In fact, one of their number raises the questions of benefits gained through "the system". Pensions and unemployment benefits, for example. Yes! It is truly

inspiring to feel the humiliation of the poverty line and the gratification of being called a dole bludger! And, our "young people" depicted are so easily convinced that all is well they realise that revolution is not required but speedy registration is. Wouldn't it be wonderful if all life's little problems could be solved so easily?

Not even the most ardent supporter of the current "state of the art" could really say that these ads. are convincing. They are simply unlikely to cut ice with the "target" group of social malcontents. It'll be interesting to see a little of the post-campaign research. Who would like to join me in a bet that it won't be as well advertised as the pre-campaign figures?

YA GOTTA BE POPULAR - VOTE!

Now to the choice of material pitched at the young women who fail to vote. This is, to my mind, the most insidious part of the whole campaign. One regular television ad. features a crowd of "happy-go-lucky" (no junkies or dolies here) frolicking on the beach. As they walk towards the camera a scantily clad young woman is featured. She is "Miss Popular" surrounded as she is by all the "fellas". The voice-over intones "What did voting ever do for us" and we hear about the wonders of pensions and the dole again.

Somehow we are supposed to be making the connection between voting and all the good times to be had by being a nubile à la plage. No serious discussion here. No talking about problems for these bright kids! Just lots of fun and games and leave the serious stuff to the oldies.

For girls, of course, this message is doubly clear. If you don't be a good time girl you just have to part of the crowd, keep your head down and leave it all to those wonderful gents in Canberra.

The worrying thing is that the characters who designed all this gumpf presumably did their fair share of market research before launching it and

believe that this sort of approach is going to work. What sort of attitude towards young people, and young women, in particular, does this indicate? Do they really believe that the demand for popularity (and crowd identification) is so pressing on young women that they would identify with the connections made in the ads.? In the minds of these campaigners being "involved" seems to boil down, for a girl, being accepted by one's peers (male). It's pathetic if you believe that we are something more than just a "crowd" animal.

THE 5% WHO WON'T VOTE

When asked "Why not vote?" why do at least 5% of us reply "Why bother?"

Now, of course, not all of this group have said to themselves some explicit statement like "My voting will only help legitimise a system that I disagree with in every respect." Some may well say something like this. But, I daresay, that there are a lot who don't bother to register or who don't bother to vote because it was "too cold", "too hot" raining, or simply had something better to do at the time. And, fair enough too. If something means little to you and, perhaps, more importantly seems beyond the hope for real change, why bother breaking your back to stay involved?

APATHY RULES. O.K.?

These "non-conscious abstainers" are so easily accused of apathy or ignorance. But it is suprising how many of these so-called "apathetic" people can be energetic about their family lives, events in their community and coming to others' aid when they see the need. The governments' own survey found that the most "apathetic" group in terms of non-voting - the unemployed - were, in fact, the most politically aware, best informed about day-to-day political events and keen to voice an opinion on the performance of the government. Yet, because they are unwilling to participate in the farce known as elections they are labelled "ignorant" and "apathetic". They now probably feel insulted as well.

Continued P.6

THE EMMA GOLDMAN PROJECT

In recent months a small group of people in Melbourne has begun work on a research project on Emma Goldman.

One of the most well-known anarchists during the turn of this century Emma has won herself an affectionate place in modern anarchist history for her amazing energy, commitment to her ideals and contribution to anarchist and anarchist/feminist thought.

In reading Emma's autobiography it is impossible not to be struck by the continuing freshness and relevance of her ideas. However, the project will be looking at all her available writings, as well as her two biographies and collected letters.

This project is an educational one. Its aim is to introduce Emma, her life and ideas to a wider audience through the production of a slide and audio-tape kit. It is hoped that this will be reproduced at low cost for other interested groups.

You can help the project by providing any photos or other material e.g. copies of more unusual material written by Emma, reviews of her work or other material written about her. If you would like to get involved in the project itself we can be contacted c/-

AFFINITY COLLECTIVE,



Emma
Goldman

LIBERTARIAN AID TO LATIN-AMERICA

This report was received via telephone from a Libertarian Aid to Latin America (L.A.L.A.) member in the United States; and gives some details of their activities.

As the name implies, LALA is a support group for Libertarians in Latin America, and was formed in 1981 by a number of libertarian and anarcho-syndicalist groups in the U.S. and Canada. It's activities include providing support for and information about the struggles of libertarians in countries such as Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Nicaragua. In turn, finances raised at film nights and meetings have gone to provide real material aid to Latin American comrades.

In one case, this aid took the form of raising money for a Chilean comrade in jail in Italy who needed urgent medical attention. He was one of six Chileans who were exiled to Cuba in 1976. Expelled then from Cuba, they made their way to Italy where, once again, four of the group were forced to leave, due in large part to the hostile activities of a

group of socialist and communist Chilean exiles in Europe called "Chile Democratico". The two remaining comrades were less fortunate and were subsequently jailed, basically for the sole "crime" of association with other anarchists.

When one of these prisoners needed money for an operation, which was apparently not provided by the Italian jail system, LALA was able to raise the funds necessary to pay for his medical care.

LALA has also been able to provide financial aid to a Brazilian network who produce the periodical "Enemigo du Rey" (Enemy of the King), but direct contact is generally difficult with libertarians and anarcho-syndicalists in Latin America; their repression is often harsh in these countries including Cuba and Nicaragua, and people there are naturally hesitant about broadcasting their whereabouts and activities. As a result, LALA's contacts and aid have so far been made entirely made mainly through exiled comrades in Europe.

The AFFINITY collective sees one of the most important and immediate tasks for libertarians in Australia is to raise moral and material support for those groups and individuals in Latin America fighting not only the murderous juntas but the authoritarian and "social democratic" left who threaten to become the "new bosses" in the quest for power.

The failure of these traditional movements to bring about real liberation of the people was discussed, in depth, in AFFINITY No. 1. Our libertarian comrades in Latin America face defeat and possibly death if we cannot apply our internationalist principles and give whatever direct aid we have available.

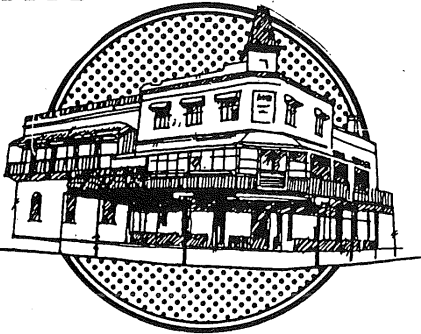
Donations ear-marked as aid to Latin American comrades can be forwarded direct to:

LIBERTARIAN AID TO LATIN AMERICA
C/o P.O. Box 692,
Old Chelsea Station,
New York, N.Y. 10113,
U.S.A.

Or

C/o The AFFINITY Collective
P.O. Box 109,
North Fitzroy, Vic. 3068

A full account of donations received C/o AFFINITY will be published in the next issue.



ADELAIDE

DIRECT ACTION TOWN PLANNING!

Ever walked down a city street and realized a graceful old building which had unique character has been replaced by an ultra modern steel chrome and glass high rise which has the same charm and architectural imagination of your local telephone box?

Of course you have and so has nearly everyone else, but except for a brief period in the early 70's resistance to this environmental destruction was rare. There are strong signs that city dwellers are fighting for their general environment, not just for their own flats.

In N.S.W. recently, two battles were fought and lost over the destruction of Martin Place's Art Deco era post office and the 1899 church at Tathra (both in Sydney). At Woonona, a "Save the Vista Committee" is fighting with some success to preserve a 1923 cinema. This remarkable building with art deco decorations and marble furnishings, has changed little since its construction. The vista is the only non-commercial venue available in an area of a quarter of a million people.

However the area where most battles are likely to take place in the immediate future is in Adelaide. Due to a lack of trees and plenty of stone much of the early city was built of stone and is still standing - or was. The Adelaide Hills limit growth and businesses prefer to be in the central area or inner suburbs for greater prestige. Their prestige is usually based on the destruction of the old stone cottages and the many remarkable buildings.

Early resistance took the form of electing a key protestor,

gaining power, Chapman proved the anarchist axiom "whoever you vote for a politician gets in".

Chapman then united with arch wreckers Alderman Chapell ("every building over a hundred years old has outlived its value") and Bloch (if they, (local residents of 30 years) don't like their houses being pulled down they can go..") The first target has been the Aurora Hotel, established in 1859 and unchanged since 1914.

The Aurora was strong in its diverse historical links. The stain glass windows were done in 1888 by the first person to work in glass in South Australia. Hans Heyson stayed and exhibited there as well as being a gathering place for the early German community as well as its association with the local theatre for 40 years. Recently the hotel has been a venue for rock groups.

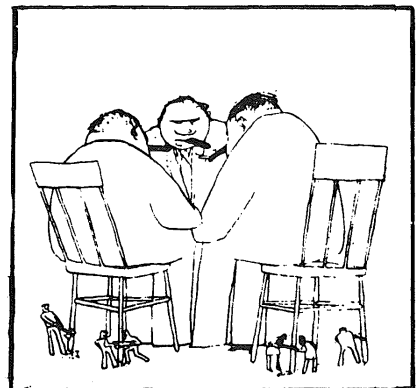
One of Adelaide's big companies decided the city needed another shoe box design high rise, full of empty offices. The battle was on when the Builders Laborer's Federation agreed not to demolish the Aurora if the action group could maintain a 24 hour picket line, which was carried on for 35 days until the 1st. December 1983. The picket line did not collapse but was crossed by BLF members after one of the organisers under legal threats withdrew and his solicitor, on his own initiative sent a letter to the BLF and the developers saying that if anyone should end up in court it should be the BLF.

Rumors that the BLF got involved and uninvolved at its convenience are unproved at present.

Aurora came down, yet out of the picket line came an organisation to fight for the Adelaide environment - the Aurora Heritage Action group.

In style and decision making the group has much about it that is strongly anarchist. Major decisions are made by a mass meeting which elects a chairperson if the need is felt, the position rotates from meeting to meeting. Work is done by affinity committees, research, publicity, fundraising and security. Members are encouraged not to be on too many committees to avoid the group being run by a few people. The social composition of the group is diverse which is good. A group fighting for the community should be a cross section of that community. Groups that consist of one peer group tend to be orientated towards fun or internal relationships - resulting in the cause for its existence goes nowhere. So far the traditional left has not moved in to turn the organisation into their usual arena for recruiting, power grabbing and eventual absorption. Hopefully this will not occur this time. The manipulation of the Unemployed Workers Union, of the anti-nuclear and peace organisations which paralysed them internally will be hard to repeat as people become aware of such manipulations.

Garry Hill



News & Notes



BIG BROTHER



In the last few months the anarchist movement has seen two attempts to associate it with "terrorist" activity.

The first case involved two people who were arrested and charged with the placing of an explosive device outside the Lucas Heights Nuclear reactor located near Sydney. Through contacts in the media, people at the JURA BOOKSHOP were tipped off that either the media and/or police were trying to link the bookshop to those responsible for this pointless act.

The so-called link? Books purchased from JURA were found in the home of one of the accused.

The second attempt to link anarchists with "terrorist" activity recently involved the anonymous threats made in Queensland by a "person or persons unknown" to release foot and mouth disease throughout the state (to effectively destroy the states' cattle industry) if reforms were not made immediately to the prison system in that state.

Numerous raids were made on left-wing households in Brisbane. Included were the homes of an outspoken activist in the PRISONERS ACTION GROUP and a community of christian anarchists.

The suspicion has arisen that the "foot and mouth" threats are a pretext by the police in that state to silence any opposition to the repressive prison system.

FREEDOM COLLECTIVE RANSACKED

In the west, the FREEDOM COLLECTIVE, Resources Centre was ransacked early in January. Walls were daubed with slogans such as "fucking poofsters" and the like.

Luckily, the centre was in the process of moving, and the printing equipment had been relocated. A large selection of CRASS records were stolen as well. It seems that some punks had visited the centre that day and had been shown the records. They were kept in a concealed place so their disappearance was not accidental.

As one Freedom Collective comrade remarked: "CRASS seems to have a real identity problem - between the marketed image of punk and the real content of their music".

The incident is almost identical to the attack on the MELBOURNE ANARCHIST CENTRE shortly after it opened in 1982.

1984 CONFERENCE

JURA BOOKSHOP (417 King St. Newtown, 2018, Phone: (02) 516 4416) have announced the organisation of a conference on the theme of "1984 AND SOCIAL CONTROL IN AUSTRALIA", to be held in Sydney. The proposed date for the conference is the Queens' Birthday Weekend (June). They invite all people interested in presenting papers, running workshops or other activities to contact the "1984 Committee" (Ask for Sid or Allison) c/o JURA

M.A.C. CLOSES

The MELBOURNE ANARCHIST CENTRE closed on March 8. The bookshop will be moving to its own location, and at press suitable premises are being looked at.

The reasons for closure are many-fold. However, the collective is optimistic that the decision to close the centre will lead to renewed activity by the groups formerly based there.

The Collective has felt for some time that the Centre has been a drain on its financial resources. The building is not suitable for large meetings and other locations were being used for some events. It was felt that it was better to put our energies into organising activities than into maintaining a building largely unsuitable for our needs. Other venues for events such as "Club Lib-ertaire's" are being looked at.

Mail for the Centre's Collective can be sent C/O P.O. Box 109, North Fitzroy.

ANARCHA-FEMINISTS

The anarchist-feminist group meets every second Monday at the Kingston Hotel (Womens Pub), 55 Highett St. Richmond (Vic.)

FESTIVAL

A number of anarchists from the M.A.C. have undertaken the organisation of a as yet untitled festival to be held in Melbourne over Easter. The festival will feature music, predominantly womens' and punk music, as well as exhibitions of CRASS ART and JILL POSTERS. Stalls, workshops and videos as well as talks are planned.

The festival will be held at the UNEMPLOYED WORKERS' UNION building, 301 St. Georges Road, North Fitzroy, 3068. Phone: 481 11 55. Contact Michael or Julie c/- The U.W.U.



ANARCHISM

Anarchism is a system of values. These values are based on the consideration that all people are of equal worth and that people's true worth can only be realised when they are free to develop individual potential.

This development of the person can only occur in co-operation with others. Hence anarchists hold dearly the value of "free association" between people. This "free association" means in practice that anarchists wish neither to be leaders or followers. Organisation on the basis of the "collective" is the means we see that can most easily avoid the order giver/order taker role that most people find themselves in capitalist society. Hence the commitment to "collective" means a rejection of "hierarchy"; another key anarchist value.

Anarchism is also the wish to bring about the putting into practice of these values within a social system in a complete way as possible.

Anarchism, finally, is a way of approaching the social reality in order to understand it, interpret it and transform it.

Anarchism is thus ethics, social analysis and revolutionary program at one and the same time: the ethics of freedom, the methodology of freedom and the program of freedom. In fact, these three aspects of anarchism cannot be separated. They are a distillation of the aspirations towards emancipation of all oppressed and exploited people, which now composes a complete and coherent system, tried in practice and confirmed or modified on the basis of new historical developments.

The aim of anarchism is to encourage people to build a SELF-MANAGED society. By this we mean a society which presupposes the abolition of the state and the private ownership of the means of production with the distribution of society's wealth on the basis of equality, the displacement of the consumer society by social relations firmly grounded in a richer cultural and community life and the reorganisation of work according

to criteria of health, interest, co-operation and so social need. It also involves the replacement of social hierarchies (domination of women by men, children by adults, experts over lay people etc.), by decision making which has its institutional basis in general assemblies of people at the grass roots level-the work place and community. This is called "direct democracy".

As revolutionaries, a anarchists can only conceive of one goal for a social revolution - the remaking of society so that human beings will be an end in themselves and life is a revered and marvelous experience!

As anarchists, we see that all action should derive from and be in harmony with this aim for total self-management; and hence self-management must be used as the reference for the control and coherence of activity. We see that there must be a consistency of our means for the ultimate aim of freedom to be achieved. This cannot be given from above or produced by anonymous forces... freedom will only occur with the practice of "direct democracy" and the self-organised activity of people. Self-activity is the only school for self-management.

References:

G.A.F. Program. (Program of the Federation of Anarchist Groups. - Italy.)

"Revolution Reassessed. The Politics of Human Liberation." Program of the Libertarian Socialist Organisation. Brisbane.



THE 5% WHO WON'T

Continued from P.2



ONE'S DUTY

Despite all this alarm on the part of the government a large proportion of people still believe that voting will get them somewhere or they believe sufficiently in the view that it is "one's duty" to vote that they continue to do so come rain, hail or shine.

Others jealously guard their right to express their "stake in democracy" every three years in an action that takes, perhaps two minutes.

Are they fools? No. They are simply trying to "participate" or "have their say". It gives credence, moreover, to a system which, like it or not, is the single-most powerful force acting upon their lives. And, here we are not talking about the parliament as the lynchpin of this "system" but rather voting as an expression of one's willingness to participate as a "citizen"; as part of a way of organising a society, an economy and a whole set of institutions nominally governed as a result of this voting process.

Psychologically speaking the individual copes better when they believe in and give support to a system that, at a sub-conscious level (or perhaps even the conscious level when we are placed in stressful situations) is so much bigger than the sum of the persons involved that it threatens to engulf and

Continued P.7

Continued from p.6.

overwhelm the individual who dares to disagree but, perhaps, has no concrete plan of resistance nor any foreseeable alternative in front of them. If alternatives were clearly annunciated for all to see who knows how many of those who currently seem to "believe" in the system would rapidly defect? If anarchists really do see themselves as describing a plausible alternative then they had better get out there and start saying something! An alternative that no-one hears about is no alternative! The goals of a non-hierarchical society based upon mutual aid with self-management as its primary goal will remain an empty hope if some way of putting this vision on the "political agenda" is not found.

For at least 5% of the population the comfort of clinging to the "winning side" of the parliamentary circus (that is, the government no matter who gets in) is not sufficiently soothing to keep them going to the polls.

GETTING ON WITH THE ALTERNATIVE

A great many of this 5% are looking at other ways of achieving things. Even if voting were to do anything a lot of people are losing patience.

They want to "take things into their own hands". These things, not surprisingly, are those issues that do matter to them. They want to make decisions about these matters themselves.

Recent examples? There are many. Squatters action at "Bona Vista", disabled women drawing attention to the hypocrisy of Miss Victoria quests, womens' pickets against the exploitation and violence promoted by sex shops, free speech fights in Brisbane's city Unemployed Workers' Union defence of their offices, Roxby Downs and Pine Gap, self-managed neighbourhood co-operatives, rank and file workers groups, neighbourhood child care co-operatives, anti-freeway groups, parent operated alternative schools and so on.

Sometimes, as in the case of mass movements such as the anti-nuclear

movement, people will have a "bet each way". They do vote and many of their actions are aimed at trying to influence the views of politicians. Simultaneously, however, they are trying to change the views of the population in the hope that popular support for their campaigns will develop.

All seems pretty reasonable -- or does it? What is the long-term effect of people who blame a particular society for the ecological and political ills that befall it but cannot see that these ailments are an integral and immutable part of a system based upon waste, private profit, and greed? In saying "something's rotten" but that it seems to come from nowhere and can be stopped "without too much disruption to the way we live" what fallacies are they spreading?

Members of these political movements are encouraged by their self-appointed "leaders" to question the decisions a particular government makes. They are never, however, encouraged to question the fact that they are not the decision-makers, themselves.

This is particularly galling when you consider the case of the anti-nuclear/peace movement. It does have popular support. However, this means little when it comes to the reality of electoral politics. Supporters of this movement were encouraged to vote the Labor Party into office because of its supposedly more "progressive" line on these issues. However, now that they are in power nothing has changed. Nor will it.

The social structure which dictates our involvement in the international arms race and the use of nuclear power remains intact. And, we are not to question that. We must, when it comes down to it put our faith in government and retain our faith in leaders. No wonder so many of those who are involved in these movements are deeply disillusioned and frustrated in their efforts. In the final instance they do not believe that they can

THE 5% WHO WON'T

change a thing. They continue their efforts largely because they feel they must - that the issues at stake are so pressing. They act out of desperate fear rather than inspired hope.

Change does not come about because someone moves the position of a tick on a piece of paper. Change comes about because something is happening to people's ideas about themselves and about how their society works. Whilst any particular self-guided political change may not achieve overnight success those involved are achieving change within themselves. One of the most liberating events in a person's life can be that moment when they realise that they are no longer an uncomprehending spectator to life's happenings but a fully conscious, resolute and active individual making decisions for themselves.

Unfortunately, some reach this condition by seeking and gaining power. They talk of "empowering themselves". To do what? The difference between the corrupted and the liberated is the constant desire of the latter to encourage this self-realisation in all. Some mouth the desirability of this but every action they take speaks for their more urgent need to have control over the lives of others. "Empowerment" is not the same as liberation.

Self-liberation occurs when individuals step outside of the safety of conformity. Our message to that girl at the "beach party" has to be that all must do something more than the triannual saunter to the local church hall.

For anarchists the task is to prove that there is an alternative to the ritual of the mark on the piece of paper and a silent wooden box.

SOURCES:

"Electoral office reveals massive underenrolment", Press Release, A.E.C. 26.9.83

"The Electoral Laws: A New Dimension", Mick Young, Special Minister of State, Address to National Press Club, 9.2.84

Forrell, G. "Corrosive alienation of young", THE AGE, Sept. 1983



Back in 1971 Richard Nixon announced new deals arranged for the production and distribution of Pepsi-Cola in the USSR, the negotiations having begun when Nixon was still a salesman for Pepsi-Cola on his way to becoming President of the United States. The original deal, involving the barter of Russian 'Stolnicheskaya' Vodka for Pepsi's 'secret formula' syrup and the setting-up on Russian soil of bottling plants by the Pepsi-Cola Corporation, was a fundamental step towards the negotiation of previously 'unthinkable' East/West capitalist co-ventures, between the 'ideologically opposed' superpowers of the 'cold war'.

Since then, Western multi-national corporations have for almost 15 years been investing technology and capital equipment in Eastern Europe, and later China, arranging deals where they in return get a portion of production to sell at dumping prices, but very profitably, on Western markets. The profitability for the Western corporations lies of course in the fact that wage costs are up to one tenth of those in the West, while workforce discipline is strictly guaranteed by the authoritarian 'socialist' production partner.

After Nixon's noisy demise over Watergate, Carter set Coca-Cola up with deals even better than Pepsi's. Coca-Cola headquarters were in Atlanta, Georgia (Jimmy's home town), and he had the full support of the Rockefeller/Coca Cola establishment. The majority of people chosen for his new administration had links with multinationals trading with the East or to clubs and foundations in which the most powerful of elites mixed and formulated policy, such as the Trilateral Commission and the Rockefeller Foundation. As Pepsico executives filed out with the rest of Nixon's administration, they were replaced by four more from Coca-Cola. Within a very short time a new deal was announced in which Coke would have the monopoly inside the Moscow Olympic Stadium, and a contract was signed for the manufacture and distribution of it's 'Fanta' range throughout the USSR (Coke remained Pepsi territory). Next stop was the Chinese Coke deal....

The most significant feature of all this is not the physical transfer of corporate production across ideological lines, but the shadowy world of relations between the elites who run both systems - the technocrats and bureaucrats of the huge global corporations, of capitalist states and of the corporation-like 'socialist' states of the East.

Fewer than 3000 people in the world control the decision-making of the largest multinationals and banks, which in turn control the smaller sections of the Western economy. Many of these corporations are powerful enough to determine the destiny of many Third World nations, while the same banks have the East in billions of dollars debt.

WHERE EAST MEETS WEST; *Capitalism, Coca Cola & Ruling Elites*

These people are linked by board-memberships, joint business and political ventures, and through their select clubs and foundations. These groups do exist and do make far-reaching decisions entirely in their own interests and entirely without accountability.

The situation is similar in the so-called 'socialist' countries, where a similar breed of economic management makes similar decisions for similar rewards (As Brezhnev's stable of sports cars demonstrated, the individuals involved have similar indulgences also). Whilst the Eastern regimes claim to be opposed to capitalism, they are content to collaborate with individual capitalists in the form of multinational employers and financiers like David Rockefeller, Chairman of Chase Manhattan Bank and linked to the world's leading multinationals and power elites (chairman of the Trilateral Commission, etc). Rockefeller was a direct partner of Brezhnev and the Communist Party elite, being instrumental in arranging huge credits to the USSR and in fixing up deals and agreements in the spirit of the Vodka-Cola deal. The tenant of No. 1 Karl Marx Plaza in Moscow is not, as might be expected, a primary Soviet institution, but Rockefeller's own Chase Manhattan Bank.

This schizophrenic separation between ideology and fact is also apparent in the West. Western armaments manufacturers hypocritically claim to be helping "fight Communism" while investing heavily in the heartland of the "enemy". Almost all the Western companies which manufacture weapons and their guidance and delivery systems, under the most lucrative conditions, are also joint-venture partners of the trade monopolies of the supposed enemy. This is true of Rockwell International, General Electric, Lockheed, Ford, Control Data, General Motors, Chrysler, McDonnell-Douglas and the Rand Corporation, all of whom have plants operating in Eastern Europe from which they are reaping rewards in the form of cheap output for re-sale in the West. Other arrangements have included a Levi-Strauss

joint-venture in Hungary producing jeans for sale in the West, and a Uniroyal tyre plant in Poland which sells it's output in France and other West European countries. Both General Motors and Renault have component factories in Eastern Europe, the finished cars being scarcely distributed in the East at all. At one stage, it was admitted in the British House of Commons that parts for cannon mounted on British NATO tanks were being made in the USSR because of more reliable delivery dates due to the absence of labor disputes! Further deals have been made like selling grain and wool to the USSR, while the USSR itself has just started operating the 4500 kilometer gas pipeline which will eventually supply Western Europe with 40 billion cubic meters of gas a year. Typically, the pipeline was built with West German, British, French and Italian corporate know-how and Russian labor. Other developments include deals between Western multinationals and Soviet foreign trade organisations establishing jointly-owned ventures in Third World countries. For example, a US/Soviet fishing company (Sovrybflot) was formed. The USSR's fishing fleet has been forming joint-ventures in Europe, Asia and Africa with local companies. The US subsidiary was called US/USRR Marine Resources Inc, and the American partner was Bellingham Cold Storage Company. Fish caught by American vessels was processed on Soviet floating fish factories. In these arrangements, the multinationals bring their know-how and the Eastern partner their labor-power and raw materials, while each shares the profit.

The cheap, manageable labor supplied by the Eastern regimes is the predominant component of these operations; after all, for the Western multinationals, there is little other attraction. The technology and know-how is Western, the machines are mostly Western-made, start up costs are considerably dearer, operating efficiencies are lower and land and buildings are a relatively insignificant factor. The only item to show a more profitable result, therefore, is labor costs. Without this advantage, and the credits, industrial cooperation would not take place.

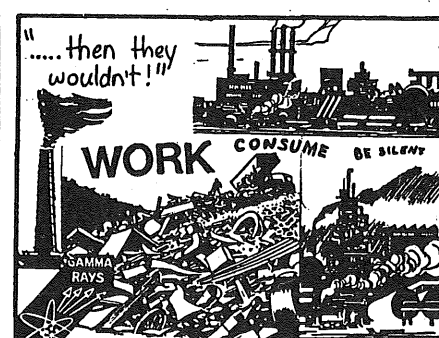
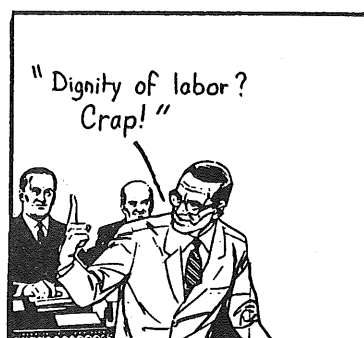
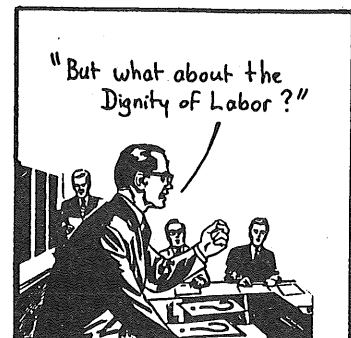
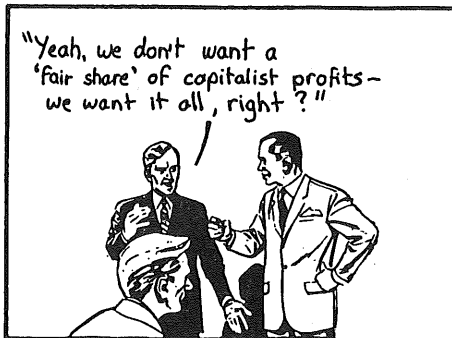
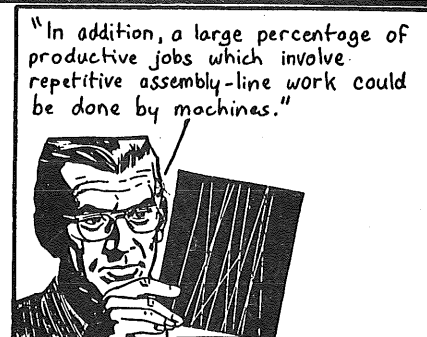
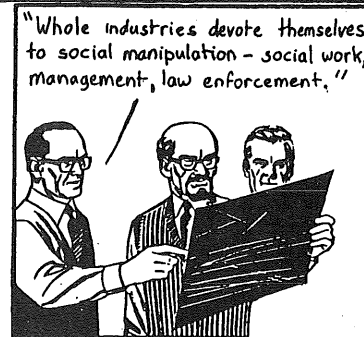
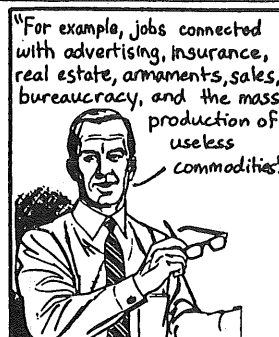
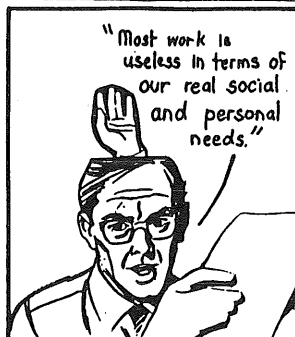
Gyrus Eaton, a Cleveland millionaire capitalist, President of Yale & Town Co, and an intimate friend and colleague of the Rockefellers and the Soviet rulers alike, put it succinctly in a statement in 1970. Commenting upon his negotiations for a \$40 million 50/50 venture tyre plant in the East, he explained that the Communist state partner would "own and operate the plant, supplying the operational management and labor". His own Western half would be located in tax-haven Switzerland which would market the tyres everywhere in the West. "This enabled the Eastern country to earn hard currency and," as he explains further, "because of lower labor costs, the venture can sell tyres cheaper than Western companies can". The Eastern European workers are donating "socially necessary labor time" to swell the profits of Western companies in direct competition with Western sisters and brothers, with the compulsion of their government and union.

The establishment of enterprises by Western multinationals in ideological "enemy territory" has also to an extent helped contribute to unemployment in the West, as the multinationals have taken advantage of Eastern blood workers in a similar way to how they exploit Third World workers. Much of the economic investment in the East, while initially generating a little employment in the West producing capital equipment, means that ultimately more jobs are probably lost as world production is proportionately concentrated more in Eastern and Third World countries where labor is cheap and discipline severe.

Despite all the media hype about "Commies" and the "Cold War", the power elites of the East and West have been in capitalist collusion for years. Deals such as massive extensions of credit, or the setting up of a chain of automotive engineering factories, are not embarked upon without lengthy planning, negotiation and coordination by the parties involved. The Coca-Cola deal was 10 years in the making. All negotiation between the elites is done in virtual secrecy, as deals of this kind not only involve billions of dollars, but public discussion of them would involve too much questioning of the respective ideologies pushed at the public East and West. It doesn't quite fit into the entirely false world view that the public has been fed, to bursting point, since the fifties, so deals are made almost conspiratorially while old ideological illusions are maintained virtually intact.

International politics has moved from the horizontal clash of alternative power elites (East v. West) to an increasingly vertical clash between the rulers and the ruled, between the power elites who act internationally and the people who are exploited and oppressed internationally. There is no more meaning to 'Left/Right' ideology in this context; there is only the continuing struggle between those below against those above.

THE EXPERTS examine WORK



AFFINITY NO.1 ~ a response..

Affinity marks another step forward for the people directly involved and for Anarchism generally. When compared with the Bulletins of the Federation of Australian Anarchists (ed. note circa 1976) both in style and content it shows progress.

Yet there are problems and I want to think out aloud, about something that's been bothering me for some time, not to confront but to test my feelings, and to ask whether anarchists are prepared to accept the challenge of proving that they are relevant to Melbourne of the 1980's.

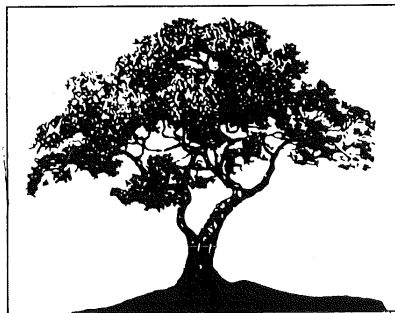
In the first Affinity we have the I.W.A. (International Workers Association) presentation of its aims and principles which are unashamedly Marxist in orientation, i.e. built on class analysis. They tell us that, for example, "revolutionary syndicalism" seeks to "educate the masses so that they will be able to completely manage the processes of production and distribution through the socialisation of all wealth". There are many other examples of a money and economics based analysis of problems and solutions. In this version of what can be called "decentralised Marxism", "workers", never "people", are encouraged to be self-managing in factories and branches of industry and be part of an autonomous network that "systematically regulates...the production and distribution processes according to the interests of the community."

I don't want to exaggerate this part of the difficulty. "Marx" and "Marxist" are not dirty words for me. Class analysis has been a useful tool, and there are many "Marxian" concepts in the work of many of what are called anarchist thinkers. Discussion about the pre-eminence of economics in the structure of social relations has however become much more complicated recently as various male commentators have moved to explain the irrelevance of class analysis to '60's, '70's and '80's social movements.

For example, in the first "Affinity" there is also an extract from Murray Bookchin's "Listen Marxist!" (1960's?) explaining that "his", i.e., Marx's principles "has been transcended not only theoretically but by the very development of society itself."

The class struggle in the classical sense has not disappeared; it has suffered a more deadening fate by being co-opted into capitalism. (p.14)

Clearly Bookchin accepted, at the time of writing, the separation of human populations into classes and presumably, therefore the notions of economic relations on which Marx's class theory was based. Bookchin goes on to talk about the need for a new analysis because of new circumstances, but if anyone can extract a coherent analysis from his later books I think they will be doing very well. In any event, I think he misses the point which is that class analysis was always inadequate and anarchists have always been trying to explain this inadequacy



Reducing people to just their "work-production-money" aspects inevitably leads into the dead-end of social theory as economic planning, leaving out the other manifestations of oppression and alienation which flow from other kinds of power, other than wealth and control of productive resources. I find it impossible to explain or to understand sexism, or racism or the whole area of psychologically/emotionally measured barriers to autonomy with an economics-based class analysis or its 20th

Century extensions, social hegemony etc. It seems to me that its only a power-analysis which comprehends people in all their roles, relations and potentials. Such an analysis is built on the perception that the personal is political. Class analysis is not.

It has been pointed out that conservatives have often pushed the "end of class" argument in order to weaken their opposition, principally the labor parties, by claiming that their natural constituency had vanished. Connell and Goot have shown that this kind of ideological attack is designed to:

- prevent working class mobilisation
 - link images of classlessness and modernity
 - discredit attempts at political change and
 - dampen resistance by discrediting people's experience.
- (Connell & Goot, "The End of Class- Re-run" Meanjin, April, 1979)

What Connell and Goot don't establish is that there is no better way of describing the conflict than class analysis. It is interesting that Connell's recent sociological work has been on male sexuality and nowhere does he use "class terminology".

Anarchists have, therefore, more to be concerned about in attempts by non-anarchists to co-opt the principles and solutions for which they, anarchists, have struggled and died. For example, Andre Gorz, in Farewell to the Working Class reviewed recently and quoted in Rabelais (La Trobe University Newspaper) by John Kent:

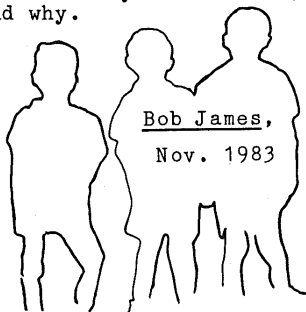
Gorz argues that the skilled workers Marx foresaw as being the agents of the change to communism have lost their central role in the revolutionary movement. The people who are potentially a liberating force are those who don't define themselves in relation to their work and who are specifically concerned with autonomy and control over their lives.

debate

It is not accidental that the peace movement and, in particular, women's groups therein, has been organised largely on non-hierarchical lines. However, pleasure at seeing out ideas utilised by what I call "unofficial anarchists" must be tempered with the unease at our possible scapegoating by the "authorities" and with the possibility of being pushed aside by a more opportunistic libertarian "Marxism". In this situation the anarcho-syndicalist strand could become extremely popular to the detriment of those of us who believe that an adequate analysis goes beyond decentralised Marxism, including the Libertarian Workers version which defines workers as those who are given orders and paid low wages". (P3. As We See It)

Again, we could find ourselves in the double-bind position of being attached and perhaps imprisoned for what we are not, and being refused acknowledgement for what we are.

On the question of scapegoating, at this point, I merely point out that the alleged "anarchist" graffiti on the radome at Pine Gap was apparently not placed there by anyone outside the gates, the bomb at Lucas Heights was "discovered" in time and newspapers such as The Age have apparently just discovered anarchism again. All of which, with the 1880's - 1890's experience, and the 1911 experience (ed. note: that is, earlier scapegoating of anarchists by the Press), very clear to me, says that we are at a most important and pivotal time, in which we could go on to markedly greater things or we could slip back into ghettoised obscurity and stigma. Either way we need to think clearly about who we are and why.



Bob James,
Nov. 1983

anzac day ~ revisited

The final trial of the women arrested at the Anzac Day demonstration last year was held on January 23rd in the Melbourne Magistrate's Court. So far, 7 women have been tried. 5 of the cases have been dismissed. 2 of the women were convicted of their charges. Interestingly, theirs were the first cases to be heard and the harsh convictions they received (\$200.00 and \$300.00 fines respectively) were, no doubt, to serve as a warning for any prospective participants in future Anzac Day activities.

The Anarchist-Feminist Group played an active role on the day. Here, one of the members of this group arrested, on the day explains her reasons for participating in the demonstration in a statement given to the court.

"I attended the demonstration because I believe that it is important for each individual to express, publicly, their views on issues on which they feel strongly.

I attended the demonstration to express my feelings about the position of women in war-time and "peacetime" and to express, also, my attitude towards war, in general.

I see rape, whether in war time or "peacetime" as the ultimate violation of a woman's person and rights. I see war as the ultimate violation of humanity. So, for me, the two issues are very closely related.

Some time ago, in 1975, I read an article in a book that really brought these two issues together for me. The book was a photo-essay book on Vietnam. One passage, in particular, struck me. I have since seen it referred to in Susan Brownmiller's book "Against Our Will". It concerned a group of American soldiers who had gone into a village on a "search and destroy" mission. It was a record of the testimony of one of the American soldiers to a public forum on war crimes during the Vietnam War.

"I saw one case where a woman was shot by a sniper, one of our snipers. And the lieutenant said to kill her. So he ripped off her clothes, they stabbed her in both breasts, they spread her eagle and

shoved an "E" (entrenching) tool into her vagina, and she was still asking for water. And then they took that out and they used a tree limb and then she was shot."

When asked whether "...it was (considered) alright to do anything to the Vietnamese the soldier replied:

"It wasn't like they were humans ... They were a gook or a Commie and it was okay."

Sgt. S. Camill in
Brownmiller, S.
Against Our Will,
Penguin, 1975, p.108

I see this example as the very reason why it was right for me to be there on Anzac Day. War is the embodiment of violence used by those in power against people, for their own ends. Cloaked in the pursuit of "national defence" or "national honour" war is a degradation of everything that I consider to be human.

Rape of women has, since ancient times, been a traditional weapon of war. When the City of Constantinople was sacked in 1204 rape and plunder went hand-in-hand, as in the sack of almost every ancient city. Today the situation is no different.

Some have said that it was wrong for us to demonstrate on Anzac Day. I believe that the issue at stake here is really one of "free expression". I respect the right of those who attend Anzac Day to commemorate the dead in war. That is why I supported the decision to march at the rear of the shrine. But I also defend my right to express another point of view about war--and "WAR" surely is the issue of the day.

Anzac Day is a public expression of a particular attitude towards war. But there is a great diversity of attitudes towards this issue in the community. To pretend otherwise is to deny the right of those with differing opinions to express these publicly. In a democracy it is out right to express different opinions. To suppress the expression of different opinions means that there is, in fact, NO democracy.

Emma - a great passion for freedom.

Book Review: Jose Peirats, Emma Goldman: Una Mujer en la tormenta del siglo, Laia Paperback, Barcelona, 1983. 312 pp.

(not yet available in English)

It is appropriate that veteran Spanish anarchist historian and activist Jose Peirats should have published this valuable addition to the literature on Emma Goldman. In a letter to Vernon Richards in September 1938, just before the last of her three visits to Spain during the civil war, the great libertarian fighter wrote that, should anything happen to her, "I will go as I lived believing to the end in the ultimate triumph of our ideas."

Also you should explain to the comrades that though I disagreed with much that our Spanish comrades had done, I stood by them because they were fighting so heroically with their backs to the wall against the whole world, misunderstood by some of their own comrades and betrayed by the workers as well as by every Marxist organisation. Whatever verdict future historians will give of the struggle of the CNT-FAI*, they will be forced to acknowledge two great actions of our people, their refusal to establish dictatorship when they had power, and having been the first to rise against fascism."

(*The anarcho-syndicalist Union and the Iberian Anarchist Federation)

Published in Anarchy, 114, August 1970.

Peirats' biography is valuable above all for its detailed discussion, based upon his own intimate knowledge and hitherto unpublished letters by Emma, of her part in and attitudes towards the libertarian revolution in Spain

during the civil War. As such, in relation to the existing literature, it is important for two reasons. The first is that Emma's autobiography (Living My Life) stops in 1931; and while Richard Drinnon's excellent (biography of Emma) Rebel in Paradise (1961), the Drinnon's (collected letters of Emma and Alexander Berkman) Nowhere at Home and Red Emma Speaks by Alix Kates Shulman, contain brief discussions, Peirats' book is the first detailed account of the trials of Goldman's Spanish involvement.

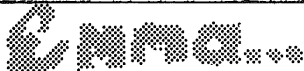


Peirats' "life" is to be welcomed, secondly, because it provides timely correction to the tendency ---represented above all in Shulman's writing---in recent times to try to transform Emma into a "feminist". Goldman was, quite rightly as a libertarian, uncompromisingly opposed to any form of sexist discrimination, and equally committed to the sexual emancipation of women. But her sexual libertarianism was no more nor less than the consistent expression of her commitment to freedom and equality for all human beings, in every sphere of human existence. Only one trapped in the myopic blinders of contemporary feminist sexism could possibly so misread and

distort Emma's full-blooded all-or-nothing libertarian legacy into the ideology for a feminist "Emma Goldman Brigade". Peirats has the good old fashioned sense and respect for fact to avoid any such sexist perversion, correctly presenting Goldman as what she was; a revolutionary passionate for human justice and equality in every domain. Genuine emancipation, insisted Emma, "will have to do away with the absurd notion of the dualism of the sexes, or than man and woman represent two antagonistic worlds."

For Goldman, freedom and truth were indivisible. To be a libertarian was to insist not just on one's rights but one's duty to speak the truth: "the truth was above everything else". (Peirats, p. 220) To deny or refuse to recognize unpleasant realities, especially when performed by "libertarians" in the name of "revolution" was at best to collaborate in dangerous wishful thinking, at worst in crimes against freedom and revolution. It was in this spirit that she overcame her natural desire to support and champion the Russian revolution forced herself to recognize the state of counter-revolutionary terror and repression created by Lenin's bolsheviks. Though few in the West wanted to know, she spoke out, helplessly, in the name of truth and freedom against the leadership's betrayal of the revolution she yearned for.

The twenties and thirties were years of bitter exile, Stalinist counterrevolution at home and abroad, and the rise of the fascist and nazi dictatorships. As courageously committed to her libertarian ideals as, Emma was 67 years old in July 1936, when the Spanish civil war erupted. Her life-long companion Alexander Berkman had just taken his own life following an incurable illness, leaving Emma feeling deeply depressed and abandoned. In those circumstances, "The triumph of the Catalan proletariat in their battle against the military uprising",



writes Peirats, "was like a floating log to which she could seize hold. That hope rejuvenated her." (Peirats, 15)

Goldman immediately went to Barcelona to serve the CNT-FAI libertarian revolution now sweeping both town and countryside. At last, her hopes were to be realized. Here, in lived reality, was the valid alternative to the repressive horrors of both State capitalism and State communism. "I can't tell you what the Spanish revolution means to me", she wrote to her friend Albert de Jong. "It occurred at the saddest moment of my life, when my old companion Sasha (Alexander Berkman) died. It didn't seem possible for me to live. The summons of the Spanish comrades was like a beacon in the dark night."

Despite the impressive achievements of the agrarian and urban libertarian collectives, Emma's hopes were soon dashed, following the Leninist decisions of the CNT-FAI leadership to join the regional and central governments, in September and November, 1936, respectively. Dispatched to London to run the CNT-FAI's press and propaganda office, Goldman experienced as never before the agonising conflict between her heart's libertarian hopes and her head's commitment to libertarian principles - "truth above all".

Believing that the only two alternatives were--as she wrote to Vernon Richards and repeated frequently in letters to other friends--either some sort of anarchist dictatorship of the "lesser evil" of collaboration in the regional and central governments, Emma chose to support the latter. Previously, in the name of freedom and truth, she had publicly denounced the "Bolshevik" principles that "noble ends can somehow justify unprincipled means" or that compromises are somehow justified by comparison with "bigger" crimes or evils. Then, in the name of genuine critical support and friendship to the revolution, she had insisted on truthfully and accurately describing the virgin's baby.

Now, as the increasingly communist-dominated governments throttled the Spanish revolution in the name of winning victory over France, Goldman allowed her heart to alienate itself from her head. Privately she would complain and criticize; but publicly, she would only "explain" and defend the beleaguered revolution and her compromised CNT-FAI comrades. Refused permission to return to Spain--she pleaded to fight and die in Spain rather than watch and suffer impotently in uncaring England--she lashed out in guilt and bitterness at Max Nettlau and other anarchist comrades as armchair critics --parlour anarchists. Despite all her private reservations (she was particularly scathing on Garcia Oliver and Frederica Monseny) publicly she would defend the CNT-FAI leadership to the end, "be this triumph or death".

Peirats sympathetically presents the drama of Emma's agony in all its tragic detail, an agony heightened after the Barcelona May Days, and the communists' murder of Camillo Berneri and other anarchist comrades. In fact, however, was Emma correct in believing that, in Peirats' paraphrase, "the Spanish comrades had no other alternative than either their own dictatorship or collaboration in the government" -- in other words, direct or indirect State dictatorship?

Though Peirats does not argue so, there were in fact, at least two other alternatives, neither of which Goldman, because of her need to hope, was willing to entertain. The first is what I take to be Peirats' own position: Given the chain of events which "placed the CNT in a morally dramatic and materially helpless position...I believe that those of us who consistently opposed collaboration with the government had as our only alternative a principled, heroic defeat." (Peirats, Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution).

But was the self-appointed CNT-FAI leadership in a morally or materialistically hopeless position in September and November 1936? I believe not. The evidence assembled by Peirats himself, Vernon Richards, Noam Chomsky, Bennett Bolloten and,

other serious students of the revolution, demonstrates that, for all the difficulties besetting the popular revolution (including the Leninist elitism and desire to collaborate of "influential" CNT-FAI leaders not least), its considerable creative achievements in almost every sphere made possible and realistic a fourth alternative: the uncompromising extension and radicalisation throughout the whole of Spain (colonies included) of the popular, libertarian revolution. Of course, there is in the nature of things, no guarantee that this option of popular revolutionary war would have sufficed to achieve its ends, given the material difficulties. The real tragedy is that Emma, and the CNT leadership, caught up in their untenable "either anarchist dictatorship or collaboration" bipolar framework, did not or could not see: (a) that this was the only alternative that could, in principle and practice, realise Emma's libertarian revolutionary hopes; and (b) that the uncompromising public urging of this alternative and rejection of the collaborationist line of the CNT "dynasty", was not merely the right but the duty of any genuine friend of popular revolution.

This was, indeed, precisely the position and practice of her comrades Buenaventura Durruti and Camillo Berneri before their deaths in November 1936 and May 1937 respectively. As Emma herself insisted in a letter to John Cowper Powys a propos the Spanish tragedy in 1938: "freedom and government do not mix".

Peirats has written a beautiful, deeply understanding, important life of Goldman and her passion for human freedom. This passion led her astray in her last campaign concerning the Spanish revolution. However, we can, if we have the courage and intelligence, to stand on her considerable shoulders and learn from her great efforts (errors included), profit immeasurably from it. For those interested, José Peirats' Emma is an excellent leg-up. With luck, the book should be available in English in the not too distant future.

by Pat Flanagan,
Barcelona
December 6, 1983

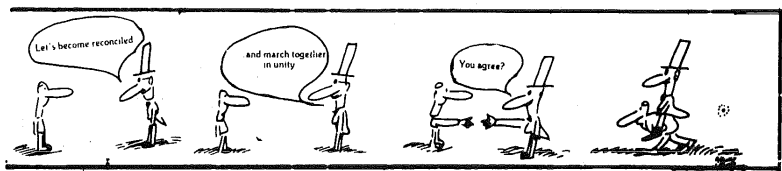
'Affinity'

P.O. Box 109,

North Fitzroy

Victoria 3068

LETTERS



Comrades,

Greetings. Thanks for sending the first issue of AFFINITY. Enclosed you will find a small donation to help get it going on a regular basis. I also want to thank you for reprinting the article sketching the biography of Anna Walentynowicz. It will no doubt be of interest to you to learn that she remains active in the fight against the Jaruzelaki regime. On December 4th. Anna was arrested along with Kazimierz Switon who like her is a veteran union militant whose activity traces back to the small free trade union committee of the 1970's. They were charged with disturbing public order for attempting to erect a plaque outside the mine near Katowice where seven striking miners died in a clash with the militia during the immediate post-martial law resistance strikes.

Nearly 500 people were present at the unauthorised ceremony. Elsewhere there is news that the comrades of the "Emmanuel Goldstein" group in Warsaw have managed to put out a newspaper. Unfortunately, however, fuller details are as yet unavailable. So despite the seemingly gloomy situation in Poland these days, there are things happening which provide reason for hope.

For Libertarian Communism,
B.C.
Canada. 30/12/83.

Dear Collectivists,

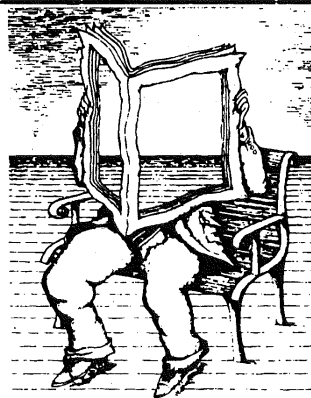
I liked the copy of AFFINITY you sent- especially the article on Poland and anarchist groups vis a vis Solidarity. The article on Central America and the issue of "national liberation" movements was more balanced than many anarchist critiques. I do feel there is a tendency for powerles (academic?) types to criticise from ivory towers without a real understanding of concrete possibilities within particular countries and situations.

Articles like the one on Poland begin to "flesh out" at least some of the current political factors.

Anyway, keep up the good work. Hope this subscription(\$10) helps with future issues. I no longer get News from Nowhere from W.A.- has it folded? A couple of us here in Adelaide would like to see AFFINITY more widely distributed here.

So long and "buen suerte"
B.A. Adelaide.

readers meeting.

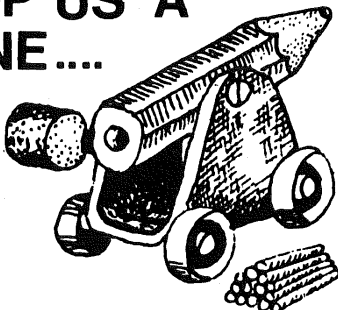


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.....if you've got any ideas, comments or questions about Affinity and/or Anarchism. We also welcome any News, Articles, or Graphics that you may like to contribute! Looking forward to hearing from you.....

IN THIS Collection of essays and articles
another way of looking at the problem of
employment is posed
by the question

WHY WORK?

ARGUMENTS FOR THE LEISURE SOCIETY



Why Work? Arguments for the Leisure Society. Edited by Vernon Richards. Freedom Press

As Richards acknowledges, the question posed in the title of this latest Freedom Press publication would be considered rhetorical by three-quarters of the world's people who still live in predominantly agrarian economies. But how does it look to the remaining quarter who live in the so-called 'affluent' industrial economies? If you happen to be one of those in this country who has been declared 'redundant' and deputed to join the fastest growing army — the army of the unemployed, now three to four millions strong and predicted to double in the next decade — you may not take kindly to the suggestion that 'the question is far from being a rhetorical one.' At first glance, the question looks stupid or worse, provocative. It might even be a lead-in for some sophistical expert economist to peddle the current nostrum — reducing the dole and other benefits so that the unemployed will have a greater incentive to get on one of Tebbit's bikes. Leaving the latter important issue aside, there is little doubt that to most people in our society, employed and unemployed alike the question, Why work? still looks absurd. Work in the sense of paid employment, disagreeable though it

often is, remains at the centre of their lives, providing not only money but much else besides — for example, status and a sense of personal identity. Confirmation of this comes in a current news item on the radio. An academic in Edinburgh reports the findings of his research: unemployed males are *eleven* times more likely than employed to commit, or attempt to commit, suicide. The rate varies with the length of unemployment: the long-term unemployed (over one year) are *nineteen* times more likely to seek this 'final solution' to their problems.

Richards, of course, is aware that the protestant work ethic, and all that goes with it, is still dominant in our society. But the question, Why work? needs to be pressed, and he is surely right in believing that 'a growing minority of working people are asking themselves this very question.'

But the truth of the matter is that unemployment on a much greater scale than at present is likely to become a permanent feature of the overdeveloped capitalist world of high technology and micro-chips. Attitudes to paid work must, therefore, be radically revised and solutions sought outside

the conceptual frameworks of both the existing political Right and Left.

Such is the rationale of this timely compilation of writings on the subject of work. The book is divided into four sections. In the first the general approach of anarchists and libertarian socialists is expressed in two classic essays: Bertrand Russell's 'In Praise of Idleness' and William Morris's 'Useful Work versus Useless Toil'. The second section, dealing with problems of work and its pleasures opens with George Woodcock's essay on 'The Tyranny of the Clock'. The clock, Woodcock observes, was the first automatic machine to attain public importance and a social function: it changed people's habits and their very conception of time. Its ascendancy is associated with that key slogan of capitalist ideology: 'time is money'. The section concludes with Tony Gibson's witty answer to that stock question a at anarchist meetings: 'Who will do the dirty work?' Of the essays in between, two are anarchist classics, each newly translated by the editor. One is Kropotkin's 'The Wage System', which provides the theoretical basis of anarchist-communism; the other is a less well known essay by Camillo Berneri which is also essential reading.

The third section on alternatives and futures includes pieces on the Israeli kibbutzim and the Spanish collectives. It includes also six brilliant drawings by Clifford Harper which graphically portray how people in existing communities might conceivably transform their way of life. The commentary to the drawings is provided by Colin Ward whose *Housing — An Anarchist Approach* has recently been re-issued, with a 1983 postscript, by Freedom Press. In compiling this section, however, the editor has not drawn only on anarchist sources. There are also August Heckscher's thoughtful essay on 'Leisure in America' and a highly original paper on 'The Other Economy: the possibilities of work beyond employment'. Don't be put off by the fact that the author of the latter, Dennis Pym, is a professor at the London Business School. Clearly, he is not a typical representative of that School, as is suggested by the note that he also 'manages a small flock of sheep in Suffolk'!

The fourth and final section consists of fifteen editorials written by Vernon Richards for *FREEDOM* between 1958 and 1962 on the theme of 'production for need versus production for profit'. Like other of Richards's editorials on other themes which have formed the basis of two previous FP books, these well deserve retrieval from the paper's files. Only the names of passing politicians and the statistics — for example, the figure for the unemployed in Britain in 1959: a 'mere' 431,000! — betray their

date. In other respects, they retain all the freshness and topicality that is evident in the editor's preface, written in March 1983, in which, of course, the statistics are up-dated. In one sense, their topicality might be thought depressing. Twenty and more years on, the same arguments still need to be made. But, more importantly, these editorials provide a lasting model for anarchist commentators. The closing words of the last editorial re-published in the book provide a good illustration of Richards's vivid style and of the thought and vision that sustains him:

'People will understand and accept the anarchist argument when they feel that the day is too short for all the things they want to do. For only then will they resent every hour they spend "earning a living" doing socially useless jobs which have only meaning for their boss. Only then will they give their meaning to life, to freedom, to individuality, instead of mouthing meaningless slogans, and will feel that these values are worth fighting for. Anarchism is not the struggle for better wages, more gadgets and full-employment. It is the struggle to win the freedom to dispose of one's own time. Time is not money; time is life. When more people can be persuaded to think along these lines we will have taken a real step forward on the road to anarchy.'

As a postscript, it may be noted that the book is dedicated to the memory of Joan Toner (1892-1978) and Jack Robinson (1913-1983). The former, a generous Friend of Freedom Press, I was not fortunate enough to know personally; but the latter — dear Jack, occasionally irritating Jack (I'm thinking of the questions he quietly levelled at me) — I did. He was a comrade who, like the compiler of this book, knew the true meaning of work and who lived accordingly. It constitutes, therefore, a fitting tribute to his memory.

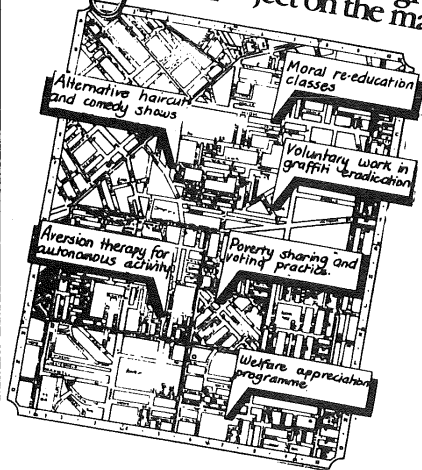
Geoffrey Ostergaard

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Millions of people, in present economic conditions have difficulty in attaining the self respect that comes from along spell of that right and duty, fundamental to all who have nothing but their chains, namely WAGE LABOUR.

Whole generations now lack the incentive to wake up, one of the most salutary traditions of our way of survival. They miss the "Monday morning" feelings so crucial to the reproduction of good humour and regularity of the HONEST WORKER, who sweats productively, obediently, ever tightening the belt.

Instead -- they fall into confusion, anguish and deviance. Abstention from work seduces them into crime. Long term laziness only encourages disorder and sedition. Moreover, millions of bludgers now have to contend with the overwhelming guilt of receiving an income without being able to contribute to the community. Sociologists and psychologists agree. Work is the perfect remedy for drug abuse, hooliganism, vandalism, atheism

In the sixties boom women, migrants and other trouble makers were encouraged to donate their surplus effort to the cause of Economic Growth. Some incorrigibles, however, abandoned this wholesome ethic; degenerating into refusing the enriching discipline of work by striking, go-slows, absenteeism and sabotage. Indifferent to the joys of labour, they made unrealistic wage demands. This threat to CIVILISATION forced employers to remodel work. Through austerity measures such as redundancy, speed-ups, income policy, inflation and other necessary remedies they have restored the DIGNITY OF LABOUR.

For workers the current mass unemployment opens unexpected prospects for toiling harder, more exuberantly, teaching them to repress excessive expectations. They should grasp the chance of labouring not only for personal fulfillment or family obligations but for the COMPANY, INVESTMENT and NATION.

The demand for "THE RIGHT TO WORK" fits excellently into the context of WORLD RECESSION and will, hopefully, stimulate competition between those in hobs and those without. Workers should recognise the sanctity of this demand and cease all activity which threatens the rules of employment. This measure will maximise JOB SATISFACTION.. Work must be valued once again. It is not enough just to do it for the money. And...why be content with only 8 hours a day?

Especially thrilling are the creation of UNEMPLOYED CENTRES where Union officials can find secure jobs and we know we can always pop in for a cold cup of tea and a warm handshake.

Through the WAGES ACCORD the Labor Government has shown us how union/government/employer co-operation can make work bracing enough to be worthwhile. We welcome the advent of the CORPORATE STATE. We find reassurance in knowing our place is at the bottom. The A.C.T.U. must be encouraged to continue marching, regimenting and representing the victims of blind market forces. How else are they to learn to go on their knees to beg?

The LEFT are to be commended for refraining from complicating matters with excessively critical theory or over-imaginative activities. They help to stabilise a dangerous situation by their diverting show of opposition. They popularise the litany that identifies class with work. Socialists all over the world are committed to elaborating the rewards of restraint. Through job-sharing, co-operatives, and other ingenuities they aspire to reform the system so that none are excluded. For the lucky few (holders of University degrees, a social conscience and previous membership of left-wing student clubs) they offer interesting jobs, participation, training, high morale and opportunities to organise others' lives.

Through the granting of new powers and expansion in the prison system, police will be encouraged to assist those genuinely seeking work.

REMEMBER! Sacrifice is not enough! The Government must encourage all to adopt the belief: "DEMAND MORE WORK - LESS MONEY".



Let's work together.
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